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Minutes 10_20_11

AYHSC Minutes – October 20, 2011
5:30pm-7:00pm

I. Welcome: Karen Dillon, Bryan Gallagher, Ned Walsh, Carlene Newell, Cindy Bouvier, Chris Schultz, Maryellen Wyman, Joe Curro, Kathy Hirsch, Mary DeCoursey, Lynn Horgan, John Scheft, Ethel Doyle, Jack Flood, Judith Carroll, Colleen Leger, Cindy Sheridan Curran

Members introduced themselves, and took turns answering the question: *“What have you done differently since our last meeting because of your involvement in the coalition?”* Members shared a number of ways in which they advance the work of the Coalition, including:

- Coordinating parent forums and school-based programs related to youth social, emotional and behavioral health. A recent presentation at the Ottoson and Arlington High School included issues about personal identity, discrimination, and accountability to others. This presentation by Dr. Michael Fowlin was well received by students and faculty at both schools. Students participated in reflective exercises and received resource information after the presentation. School-sponsored initiatives, like the recent Michael Thompson parent presentation, are also used to help raise awareness of the Coalition, and other community resources.
- Collaborating with Mt. Auburn Community Health on local prevention initiatives
- Promoting parental education on harmful effects of substance use at the Department of Youth and Families
- Offering assistance to push forward policy initiatives on the School Committee
- Conducting law enforcement trainings for police, community members and other local coalitions on the Marijuana and Social Host Laws, and providing legal consultation to the Diversion Program
- Strengthening partnerships with local youth-serving agencies, such as the Board of Youth Services and the Arlington Boys & Girls Club and raising awareness about social and recreational opportunities available to youth after school and on weekends.
- Exploring new opportunities for collaboration between the Coalition and the Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA). The ACA will provide space for the Guiding Good Choices parenting programs. In addition, and with expressed support from the Coalition and the Arlington Police Department, ACA submitted a grant proposal to offer Friday Night “Creative Arts Opportunities” for teens this winter.

During introductions, three new members shared their background, reasons for attending the Coalition meeting, and interests related to healthy youth activity. The Coalition welcomed Ned Walsh, who is the new School Resource Officer (SRO) at the Arlington High School, and community members Judith Carroll and Mary Ellen Wyman to the meeting.

II. Coalition Annual Assessment

Colleen thanked members for participating in the online Coalition Assessment survey. The annual survey collects information from Coalition members about their knowledge, perspectives and opinions on the work of the coalition. Twenty-five members responded to the survey, 74% of whom were volunteers, and 67% of whom had

been members of the coalition for 1-5 years. The results of the survey were compiled into a report by coalition evaluator Deacon Dzierzawski from Epiphany Community Services. The report covers multiple facets of the coalition including: infrastructure, dynamics, community and membership engagement, coalition strategies and coalition resources. Colleen provided an overview of the findings, and offered a copy to interested members. Overall findings showed that coalition members were in agreement for the majority of the survey questions. Notable areas for improvement included: increasing awareness and communication of coalition infrastructure and environmental strategies, and distributing the work of the Coalition more evenly. Findings were broken down into the following categories:

Coalition Staff and Structure: Paid coalition staff include Colleen, Lynn and Cindy. While a community coalition, AYHSC is also a division of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Department for the Town. HHS does have a separate charitable corporation (enabling us 501c3 status), which allows us to apply for certain grants and other foundation support.

Coalition Dynamics: The Coalition has been in existence almost 6 years, and has maintained a somewhat informal leadership structure during that time. Our primary funding source (Drug Free Communities Program) encourages a more formalized organizational and decision-making structure, as this proves to be a more sustainable model for coalition work. We will move in this direction over the next few months. Members expressed nearly unanimous agreement in their ability to share ideas openly and exchange perspectives in a supportive environment. Members indicated some uncertainty around task distribution, as well as the individual roles and responsibilities of Coalition members. Members were reminded that they could all do something to reduce underage drinking and substance abuse, and to advance the mission of the Coalition. They were asked to consider what that looks like in their day-to-day lives.

Coalition Membership and Engagement with the Community: Members recognized that there are community organizations, not currently involved in Coalition work, which would be valuable partners to AYHSC. Members were asked to help identify and reach out to these organizations. Members discussed opportunities for greater collaboration with Arlington Boys and Girls Club, Arlington Recreation and Fidelity House. Members questioned whether the makeup of coalition membership accurately reflects the cultural diversity of the community as a whole. Some members disagreed that Coalition volunteers are able to invest enough time to AYHSC.

III. Updates

Tobacco Peer Leadership Program (OMS): Kelsey Craig, of Arlington Enrichment Collaborative (AEC) has been running the Tobacco Prevention Peer Leadership curriculum she developed in collaboration with Diana Weisner of AEC, Mary DeCoursey and Mary Johnson of Mt. Auburn Hospital and AYHSC. The curriculum covers social norms theory, a history on tobacco and tobacco prevention, new tobacco products, media literacy, and event planning for the Great American Smokeout on November 17.

Guiding Good Choices: the first workshop series of the year began on Wednesday, October 19th. Facilitators Mindy Davin and Sheryl Cohn welcomed a group of fourteen parents to the series, and reported back that it was a warm and interactive first session. Additional Guiding Good Choices series have been scheduled for November/December and February/March. Cindy Sheridan will facilitate those series.

Parent Forums: Carlene updated the group about upcoming parent forums, including a presentation by Job Mattleman – “The Secret Life of a Massachusetts Teen” on Wednesday, November 30th. Colleen also informed the group that Adam Liss from Cape Stress Reduction & Optimal Health will conduct an “Orientation to Mindfulness” presentation on Wednesday, January 11th.

Diversion Expansion Project: Colleen informed the group that AYHSC and AYCC were awarded a 3-year grant by the CHNA 17 and Mount Auburn Hospital. This grant will support a collaborative project between AYHSC and AYCC to better understand and address the experiences and treatment needs of substance-using youth. In addition, the project will support a rigorous review of the Arlington Diversion Program, as well as the development of a Diversion resource guide for use by other communities.

Medication Disposal: The Coalition, in collaboration with the Arlington Police Department, is participating in the DEA-sponsored National Take-Back Day. This event will occur on October 29th from 10:00am through 2:00pm. AYHSC and the APD will also collaborate with the Arlington Department of Public Works to offer medication and sharps take-back from 9:00am through 1:00pm during Community Collection Day.

IV. Upcoming Events, Trainings & Volunteer Opportunities

Date	Event	Time	Description
October 29	National Drug Take-Back	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	~Help with program promotion ~Assist with med collection
Oct. 31-Nov. 10	Online Course	Three hour, web-based	“Can We Scare the Health into Our Communities?”
November 1	Think:Kids Rethinking Challenging Kids	9:00AM-4:00PM	“A New Approach for Parenting, Teaching, and Treating Children with Behavioral Challenges
November 2	Statewide Gathering for Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions	8:00 AM- 3:00PM	“Moving the Commonwealth to Action: What's Possible in Substance Abuse Prevention, and Who Cares”
November 19	Community Collection Day	9:00 AM- 1:00 PM	~Help with program promotion ~Assist with med & sharps collection
December 7	AHS YRBS	TBD	~Help preparing surveys ~Support YRBS administration

V. Words to Action

Time did not allow for members to break up into working groups.

VI. Meeting Adjournment

Next meeting: November 17, 2011.